[581] Dutemõdednige (b1), say the Nambikwara men; "it is a good
582 thing to marry." But it is not easy. The ideal marriage is the one which gives a "young and pretty woman" (monodunuẽre, b1) whose virginity one will have (to break the hymen: tauorotige, b1). But such women are precisely the ones who are claimed by the chiefs or shamans, and only a few young men will have a chance to obtain such wives. The others are condemned to a long period of celibacy
[838] which they will break by having sexual relations with their brothers-in-law, or else they will marry an "old woman" who cannot have sexual relations (tiroanebiĩere, b1), one who is widowed or repudiated, whom no one wants. Such marriages are not rare among the Nambikwara, and are explained by the fundamental economic role of the couple which we have already commented on. But they are not permanent. When the young man feels his position in the group
582 strengthened, or when a better occasion is presented he abandons
● 586 (amnjotige, b1) his old wife to take another (ulamtunjotige, b1) who
587 is younger and more seductive. It happens that a man thus marries three or four wives successively before considering himself satisfied.(1)

[171]

1. Here also, the documents of the 16th century relating to the Tupi support the comparison: "... at times they take some old woman from whom they do not expect children, because there are no others, only so that they will cook the food, since they have no mother or sisters-in-law to take care of them, thus they are cared for, and are contented at present time with some old woman by whom they are always well treated and then taking other women by whom they have children later, either leaving the first wife or keeping her, if she wishes, for the reason mentioned above." (Anchieta, loc.cit., p. 260-261).

The repudiated woman [111] goes to live with her parents if they are still living, joins up with another man if she has the opportunity or even remains her former husband's fire, whose existence she shares and whose tasks she participates in, but in a slightly inferior position. Such is the position of b3 in the household of her ex-husband B1. Another method of obtaining the young woman desired consists of
836 seducing her, even if she is married. Adultery and more generally sentimental intrigues are very frequent among the Nambikwara,

2: Lévi-Strauss E-5 (1938-1939)1948
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tainship is not hereditary; the chief, when old or sick, designates his successor from the ablest men of the group. The chief's authority is slight; it depends wholly on the good will of the family heads. 622

Relations between neighboring bands are inspired both by fear and by the desire to exchange goods. Warfare, therefore, is closely connected with barter. Groups not acquainted with each other use ritual speech when they meet. 619 438

Before starting a war expedition, a divinatory rite is performed with special songs and dances. An arrow is hidden by the shaman, the outcome of the expedition being pressaged by its appearance the following day. 721 787

LIFE CYCLE

Childbirth.—After the delivery of a child, the placenta is buried in the bush and both parents are subjected to rigid prohibitions concerning food, the use of ornaments, and social contacts. 844

Puberty.—The initiation rite for young men consists of piercing their lips and nose and giving them their adult personal name. At her first menstruation, a girl is isolated for several months in a special shelter outside the village, where she is given ritual food by her mother. At the end of the rite, she takes a long bath in the river; this also constitutes the first step of the marriage ceremony. 881 [304]

Both cross-cousin and avuncular marriages (see p. 367), are often planned by parents for their infant children. Marriage is celebrated by festivals, banquets, and dances. The union is pronounced by the chief. Fish and fishing are important both before and during the ceremony. 584 585

Separation is frequent, the chief cause being that the man seeks a younger and prettier woman. There is no social sanction of adultery, except that the seducer is advised by his companion to go away for a while so as to avoid the husband's revenge. A murderer also flees vengeance. 586 684 682

Death.—Some groups of *Nambicuara* bury their dead in a circular pit, the corpse being placed in a crouching position. Others leave the corpse to decompose in an elongated ditch and later wash the bones in the river, put them in a basket, and bury them in the village, which is then abandoned. Weapons, implements, adornments, and other property of the deceased are destroyed, but his garden—if he owned one—is abandoned only for a few months. Later anybody may cultivate it. 764

ESTHETIC AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Art.—Most *Nambicuara* groups are completely ignorant of drawing, although some groups decorate calabashes with dots and straight and sinuous lines. These are conventionalized reproductions of realistic designs found among other groups. 531

4: Oberg E-5 (1949)1953
SP17 Nambicuara SP17

619 which cause sickness, they have given the magical herbs whose smoke blinds the dangerous *anúnsu*, and the techniques which will drive away the storms. Thus the shaman operating on a symbolic level continues the struggle for survival which has been defined for the Nambicuara by the nature of their adjustment to their physical environment and their relationships to one another.

THE LIFE CYCLE

BIRTH

833 The Nambicuara recognize sexual intercourse [842] (*winsúenditsu*) as the cause of pregnancy (*haldjítsu*). This act takes place in the woods while the husband and wife are out hunting or collecting, for it is considered improper to have sexual intercourse in public, even at night around the common camp fire. If a shaman should see a couple in 756 sexual embrace while practicing his rites it would 833 spoil his power. Although shamans use a special hut when calling their *anúnsu* there is always a chance that they may see a couple in the sexual act, so every effort must be made to avoid this [834] danger. Shamans themselves abstain from sexual intercourse for 2 or 3 days before getting in contact with the spirits.

843 There appear to be no food taboos surrounding pregnancy among the Waklítisu. The husband continues hunting and collecting as usual, but he must avoid working too hard in the field for fear of causing his wife to abort. Women do [847] not practice abortion, and the Nambicuara did not mention any medicines used for this purpose. [832] Honey is considered conducive to sexual vigor and is used by young couples. Childless marriages [843 586] are attributed to sterility in women, and a man may abandon his wife for this reason.

844 Birth takes place in the house, or in the camp if the family is out hunting. Just before expecting the birth of a child the expectant mother drinks [824] the juice of certain herbs which are believed to facilitate birth. The husband and two older women assist in the delivery. The woman kneels on the ground and is supported by her husband. The umbilical cord is tied with a certain vine and then cut with a bamboo sliver. Among the Kitânrhu it is bitten off by one of the midwives. The placenta is buried at the place of birth and when the umbilical cord dries and falls off, it, too,

[p. 102 (8)]